

**SAN LORENZO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD POLICY
Attendance, Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism**

**BP 5112.1
Students**

Each student between the ages of 6 and 18 shall be subject to compulsory full-time education. (Education Code 48200)

However, the Superintendent or designee may grant exemptions from compulsory attendance to a student as allowed by law and in the best interest of the student. Exemptions shall not be used to remove a student from the school for disciplinary purposes.

As needed, the Superintendent or designee may require a student or his/her parent/guardian to submit written documentation that the student fulfills one of the conditions specified in law and administrative regulation for which exemption is authorized.

Absences And Excuses

The Governing Board believes that regular full time attendance plays a key role in student achievement. The Board shall work with parents/guardians and students to ensure their compliance with all state attendance laws, and may use appropriate legal means to correct problems of chronic absence or truancy.

Excused absences

Absence from school shall be excused only for health reasons, family emergencies, and justifiable personal reasons, as permitted by law, Board policy, and administrative regulations. (Education Code 48205)

Inasmuch as class participation is an integral part of students' learning experiences, parents/guardians and students shall be encouraged to schedule medical appointments during non-school hours.

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent or designee shall send a notification to the parents/guardians of all students, and to all students in grades 7-12, informing them that school authorities may excuse any student from school to obtain confidential medical services without the consent of the student's parent/guardian. (Education Code 46010.1)

Students shall not be absent from school without their parents/guardians' knowledge or consent except in cases of medical emergency or confidential medical appointment.

Student absence for religious instruction or participation in religious exercises away from school property may be considered excused subject to law and administrative regulations. (Education Code 46014)

Effect of Absence on Grades/Credits

If any student's absence is excused under Education code 48205, he/she shall be allowed to complete any missed assignment or test that can be reasonably given, as determined by the teacher of that class. The student shall be given full credit for the assignment or test if he/she satisfactorily completes the assignment or test within a reasonable period of time. (Education Code 48205)

A student's grades may be affected by excessive unexcused absences in accordance with Board Policy.

Chronic Absence and Truancy

The Governing Board believes that excessive absenteeism, whether caused by excused or unexcused absences, may be an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and may put students at risk of dropping out of school. The Board desires to ensure that all students attend school in accordance with the state's compulsory education law and take full advantage of educational opportunities provided by the district.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a system to accurately track student attendance in order to identify individuals who are chronic absentees and truants, as defined in law and administrative regulation, and to identify patterns of absence throughout the district. He/she shall provide the Board with data on school attendance, chronic absence, and truancy rates for all district students, for each school, and for each numerically significant student subgroup as defined in Education Code 52052. Such data shall be disaggregated and used in the development of annual goals and specific actions for student attendance and engagement and for inclusion in the district's local control and accountability plan and other applicable school and district plans.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop strategies that focus on prevention of attendance problems, which may include, but are not limited to, efforts to provide a safe and positive school environment, relevant and engaging learning experiences, school activities that help develop students' feelings of connectedness with the school, school-based health services, and incentives and rewards to recognize students who achieve excellent attendance or demonstrate significant improvement in attendance. The Superintendent or designee also shall develop strategies that enable early outreach to students as soon as they show signs of poor attendance.

The Superintendent or designee shall work with students, parents/guardians, school staff, and community agencies, as appropriate, to identify factors contributing to chronic absence and truancy. He/she also may collaborate with child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, public health care agencies, other government agencies, and/or medical, mental health, and oral healthcare providers to ensure that alternative educational programs and nutrition, health care, and other support services are available for students and families and to intervene as necessary when students have serious attendance problems.

Students who are identified as truants shall be subject to the interventions specified in law and administrative regulation.

A student's truancy, tardiness, or other absence from school shall not be the basis for his/her out-of-school suspension or expulsion. Alternative disciplinary strategies and positive reinforcement for attendance shall be used whenever possible.

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically report to the Board regarding the district's progress in improving student attendance rates for all students and for each numerically significant student population. Such information shall be used to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented to reduce chronic absence and truancy and to make changes as needed. As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee shall engage school staff in program evaluation and improvement and in identification of how to best allocate available community resources.

School Attendance Review Board

In accordance with law and administrative regulation, habitual truants may be referred to a school attendance review board (SARB).

The Board shall appoint members of the district's SARB, who may include, but are not limited to, a parent/guardian as well as representatives of the district; county probation department; county welfare department; county office of education; law enforcement agencies; community-based youth service centers; school guidance personnel; child welfare and attendance personnel; school or county health care personnel; school, county, or community mental health care personnel; the county district attorney's office; and the county public defender's office. (Education Code 48321)

The district's SARB shall operate in accordance with Education Code 48320-48325 and procedures established by the Superintendent or designee.

**SAN LORENZO
UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Administrative Regulations
Attendance, Truancy, Chronic Absenteeism**

AR 5112.1
Students

Excused Absences

A student's absence or tardiness shall be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness (Education Code 48205)
2. Quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer (Education Code 48205)
3. Medical, dental, optometric or chiropractic appointments (Education Code 48205)
4. Attendance at funeral services for a member of the immediate family.
 - a. Excused absence in this instance shall be limited to one day if the service is conducted in California or three days if the service is conducted out of state. (Education Code 48205)
 - b. "Immediate family" shall be defined as mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, spouse, son/son-in-law, daughter/daughter-in-law, brother, sister or any relative living in the student's immediate household (Education Code 45194, 48205)
5. Jury duty in the manner provided by law.
6. Serving as a member of a precinct board for an election (Election Code 12302, Education Code 48205)
8. If a student is the custodial parent of a child, his/her absence shall be excused when the child is ill or has a medical appointment during school hours (Education Code 48205)

In addition, a student's absence or tardiness shall be excused for justifiable personal reasons. Advance written request by the parent or legal guardian and approval of the principal or designee shall be required for absences for:

1. Appearance in court.
2. Attendance at a funeral service.
3. Observation of a holiday or ceremony of his/her religion.
4. Attendance at religious retreats for no more than four hours during a semester.
5. Employment interview or conference.
6. To spend time with his/her immediate family member who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, as defined in Education Code 49701, and has been called to duty for deployment to a combat zone or a combat zone support position or is on

leave from or has immediately returned from such deployment (Education Code 48205)

Participation in religious exercises or to receive moral and religious instruction in accordance with district policy (Education Code 46014 The District has adopted a resolution under Education Code §46014 permitting students to be absent from school for religious exercises or instruction, with the written consent of their parents, as long as the following conditions are met:

- a. Each student so excused shall attend school at least the minimum school day for his grade (230 minutes for grades 1-3, 240 minutes for grades 4-8 and 240 minutes for grades 9-12 or 180 minutes for students in vocational training and work experience programs, unless otherwise provided).
 - b. No student shall be excused from school for such purpose more than four days per month.
7. Other justifiable reason as determined by the principal.

When a student who has been absent returns to school, he/she shall present a satisfactory explanation verifying the reason for the absence. Absences shall be verified by the student's parent/guardian, other person having control of the minor, or the student if age 18 or older.

The following methods may be used to verify student absences:

1. Written note, fax, email, or voice mail from parent/guardian or parent representative.
2. Conversation, in person or by telephone, between the verifying employee and the student's parent/guardian or parent representative. The employee shall subsequently record the following:
 - a. Name of student
 - b. Name of parent/guardian or parent representative
 - c. Name of verifying employee
 - d. Date(s) of absence
 - e. Reason for absence
3. Visit to the student's home by the verifying employee, or any other reasonable method which establishes the fact that the student was absent for the reasons stated. The employee shall document the verification and include the information specified in item #2 above.
4. Physician's verification.
 - a. When excusing students for confidential medical services or verifying such appointments, district staff shall not ask the purpose of such appointments but may require written verification of the appointment, or contact a medical office to confirm the time of the appointment.
 - b. When a student has had five absences in one month, the school or district may require that all further illness be verified by a physician.

5. Further confirmation of the reason given for the absence may be sought if the verifying employee has personal knowledge that provides a basis of reasonable certainty that the information provided is false.
6. Full or partial day absences for middle and high school students which remain unverified two days after the student's return to school shall be recorded as a "cut" and counted as an unexcused absence.

Unexcused Absences

Absences or tardiness for reasons other than those stated above shall be unexcused, notwithstanding any prior notification by the parent or legal guardian, including but not limited to, absences for the following reasons:

1. Vacation
2. Babysitting
3. Working or working late the night before school
4. Lack of transportation
5. Staying home with a sick family member
6. Suspension

In accordance with the Education Code, teachers are authorized to assign a failing grade to any student who has more than 10 unexcused absences (traditional schedule) or 7 unexcused absences (block schedule). Each school shall ensure that teachers conduct a conference with, or send a written report to, the parent of each student when it becomes evident to the teacher that the student is in danger of failing a course. Each school shall also establish a process to afford the student or the student's parent or guardian a reasonable opportunity to explain the absences. If a student is assigned a failing grade pursuant to this policy, the student's record shall reflect that the failing grade was assigned on the basis of excessive unexcused absences. Academic credit shall not be prevented or lowered due to *excused* absences.

At the secondary level, excessive unexcused absences may result in a loss of the privilege to participate in certain extra-curricular activities, such as dances or sports, based on school policy.

Students who are, or will be, absent for more than ten days due to family vacations travel, or non-contact with school or district personnel, may be dropped from enrollment effective on the first day of the extended absence. Students shall be placed immediately in a class upon return, however, placement in the same classroom or school is not guaranteed.

Truancy

The Superintendent or designee shall implement positive steps to reduce truancy, such as communication with parents or legal guardians and the use of student study teams.

1. Students shall be classified as truant if absent from school without a valid excuse (unexcused or unverified) for three full days in one school year, or tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. Such students shall be reported to the Director of Student Support Services.
2. Should a student who has previously been reported as truant fail to appear or be tardy at school one or more days (without a valid excuse), that student will again be reported as truant to the Director of Student Support Services.
3. The parent or legal guardian of a student classified as a truant shall be notified in writing of the following:
 - a. The student is truant;
 - b. The parent or legal guardian is obligated to compel the student to attend school;
 - c. The parent or legal guardian who fails to meet this obligation may be guilty of an infraction of the law and subject to prosecution pursuant to Education Code §§ 48290-48296;
 - d. Alternative educational programs are available in the district;
 - e. The parent or legal guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the student's truancy;
 - f. The student may be subject to arrest by a probation officer, a peace officer, a school administrator, an attendance supervisor or his/her designee under Education Code § 48264 if found away from home and absent from school without a valid excuse;
 - g. The student may be subject to suspension, restriction or delay of his/her driving privilege pursuant to Vehicle Code § 13202.7; and
 - h. It is recommended that the parent or legal guardian accompany the student to school and attend classes with the student for one day.
4. At any given time, a truant student found off campus may be given a written warning by a peace officer. A record of this warning may be kept at school for at least two years or until the student graduates or transfers from the school. If the student transfers, the record may be forwarded to the new school.
5. Upon his/her second truancy within the same school year, a school site administrator or counselor may meet with the student and parent or legal guardian to discuss improvement of attendance and resources available to assist the student, which may include an after school or weekend study program located within the County.

6. Upon his/her third truancy within the same school year, a student shall be classified a habitual truant as defined in Education Code § 48262 and may be referred to the appropriate district staff for a conference and possible referral to the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) and/or a truancy mediation with the District Attorney.
7. No student shall be deemed a habitual truant unless district staff has made a conscientious effort to hold at least one conference with the student and the parent or guardian of that student.

SARB

When a student is referred to SARB, the Superintendent or designee shall provide the student and parent or legal guardian, in writing, the reason for the referral. This notice shall indicate that the student and parent or legal guardian will be required, along with a district staff member, to meet with the SARB to consider a proper disposition of the referral.

If the SARB determines that available community services can resolve the problem of the truant or insubordinate student, then the SARB shall direct the student and/or the student's parents or legal guardians to make use of these resources.

If the SARB determines that available community services cannot resolve the problem of the truant or insubordinate student or if the student and/or student's parents or legal guardians have failed to respond to the directives of the SARB or to services provided, the SARB may notify the County District Attorney.

If a student has been judged by the county juvenile court to be a habitual truant or habitually insubordinate or disorderly at school, or if a student has been required by the court to attend school as a condition of probation, the district shall inform the juvenile court and the student's probation or parole officer, within 10 days, whenever that student is insubordinate, disorderly at school, or truant or tardy without a valid excuse.

The Superintendent or designee may gather and transmit to the Alameda County Superintendent of Schools the number of referrals and types of referrals made to the SARB and the number of requests for petitions made to the juvenile court.

Attendance Taking Procedures

Attendance will be taken in accordance with the San Lorenzo Unified School District Student Attendance Accounting Manual.

K-12 Attendance Collection and Reporting Procedures

BACKGROUND

- ✚ Attendance accounting is one of the most important functions of the District
- ✚ Attendance needs to be a high priority at all levels
- ✚ Attendance must be taken within the first 15 minutes of class to ensure accurate attendance reporting

ELEMENTARY PROCEDURES

- ✚ Every classroom teacher is required to take attendance daily by indicating absent students on the **Aeries Browser Interface (ABI)** attendance screen.
- ✚ **ABI** attendance is submitted to the site Attendance Clerk in the morning.
- ✚ The site Attendance Clerk verifies all **ABI** attendance has been submitted.
- ✚ Students who arrive late are given an admit slip and time of arrival is recorded for input into the Aeries system by the Attendance Clerk.
- ✚ A log is kept of parent calls verifying the reasons for absences.
- ✚ The Attendance Clerk calls the parents for whom there has been no verification.
- ✚ Reasons for absences are recorded by the Attendance Clerk.
- ✚ The Attendance Clerk inputs data from parent contacts in the Aeries system according to the absence codes defined on pages 23-25.
- ✚ **Attendance not submitted by ABI** - At the end of each week, teachers are required to print out the Weekly Attendance Report verifying all absences, sign and date in ink and submit to the site Attendance Clerk. Reports are due to the attendance office by Monday of the following week.
- ✚ **Attendance Log (annually)** for electronic attendance/digital signature submission compliance. Attendance Clerk to request teachers, print, sign, and turn in an Attendance Log Report for a date range (chosen by clerk) to be filed with attendance records.

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL PROCEDURES

- ✚ Every classroom teacher is required to take attendance during the first 15 minutes of each period by indicating tardy and absent students in **Aeries.Net** on the **Teacher Portal** attendance screen.
- ✚ **Aeries.Net** attendance is submitted to the site Attendance Technician after every period.
- ✚ The site Attendance Technician verifies all **Aeries.Net** attendance has been submitted by running the **Print Missing Attendance** report.

- # Students who arrive more than 30 minutes late are given an admit slip and their tardiness (and time of arrival) is recorded for input into the Aeries system by the Attendance Technician.
- # A log is kept of parent calls verifying the reasons for absences.
- # The Attendance Technician calls the parents for whom there has been no verification.
- # Reasons for absences are recorded by the Attendance Technician.
- # The Attendance Technician inputs data from parent contacts in the Aeries system according to the absence codes defined on pages 23-25.
- # **Verification Forms** (If scanner is being used at site) are printed, completed and scanned. This is used to mass update unverified absences for a specific date range.
- # The Attendance Technician verifies the attendance of students marked as present in only one class period during the school day (see page 55, **Print Period Absence Audit** report.)
- # **Attendance Log** is required once annually (school year) for electronic attendance/digital signature submission compliance. Attendance Clerk to request teachers, print, sign, and turn in an Attendance Log Report for a date range (chosen by clerk) to be filed with attendance records.
- # **Attendance NOT submitted by Aeries.Net** - At the end of each week, teachers are required to print out the **Weekly Attendance Report** verifying all absences, sign and date in ink and submit to the site Attendance Technician. Reports are due to the attendance office by Monday of the following week.